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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000664

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC  
OSLO FOR HELENA SCHRADER  
DOE FOR GPERSON, CAROLYN GAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART  
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT  
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/05/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [OES](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN SHRIMPING INDUSTRY DECRIES PIRATE ATTACKS

Classified By: Acting Consul General Vicki Hutchinson for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

11. (SBU) Summary: During a recent Turtle Excluder Device (TED) inspection visit, many Nigerian shrimp companies told the Poloff that pirates have boarded their boats, robbed their crew and equipment, and confiscated their catches. Eight Nigerian shrimp companies operate approximately 150 boats in the Bight of Bonny near the Niger Delta, a region most commonly known for militant activity aimed at international oil companies. According to industry contacts, the Nigerian Navy Patrol has been unable to police the waters to secure the shrimp fleets' safety. End Summary.

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Pirates Ransack Vessels For Booty  
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12. (C) According to the Managing Director of ORC Fishing and Food Processing Ltd. (Nigeria), the third largest shrimp fleet in Nigeria, security is a "very sensitive topic" because although piracy has long posed a problem, the Nigerian naval patrol has done little to combat it. On August 7, pirates (widely recognized as armed Niger Delta inhabitants who use outboard motor boats to approach shrimp vessels) looted a vessel's radios, electronics, the crew's personal belongings, and the boat's catch. This company representative said the frequency of pirate attacks varies; sometimes months will pass without a robbery and sometimes one boat will be hit multiple times a day. The most damaging aspect of a pirate attack, especially when there is violence against the workers, is a plummet in crew morale.

13. (C) Another company's captain commented that the security situation appears to have improved between June and September 2007, but he also acknowledged the tide was "much worse" during this period and may have kept pirates from the open water. Another captain predicted that, as they had in

previous years, attacks would become more frequent as the holiday season approached.

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Pirate Attacks, High Gas Prices  
Low Catch Make 2007 a Hard Year  
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¶4. (SBU) Many shrimp company representatives voiced the same concerns to the Poloff: pirate attacks, increased gas prices, and a low catch this year have made operations expensive and difficult. The largest shrimp company operating in Nigeria said one way it is addressing high operating costs is by dry docking its boats more frequently than is the norm. Dry docking entails raising boats out of the water so rust and barnacles can be cleaned from the hull. This, our interlocutor said, allows for more efficient fuel use.

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Minimal Export to U.S.--Eco-Friendly Euro Label  
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¶5. (SBU) Prim 7 Stars's Atlantic Shrimpers Ltd. is undeniably Nigeria's largest shrimp company with an active fleet of 69 boats (the next largest is Banarly with 24 boats). Managing Director Manjit Sadarangani said Atlantic is the only company that produces enough product to fill a container to export shrimp to the United States. Since the U.S. shrimp import ban was lifted from Nigeria in January 2007, Atlantic has exported 5-6 containers to the U.S., Sadarangani said. Nigerian shrimp exports to the U.S. are low because the American market prefers more labor intensive products including head-off and peeled shrimp. European

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markets, particularly in Portugal and Spain, do not require this additional processing. Sadarangani admitted the Nigerian shrimp industry has come to accept turtle excluder device compliance, which is necessary to export shrimp to the U.S., because it gives them an edge in European markets where they can label their product "eco-friendly."

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Comment  
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¶6. (SBU) Pirate attacks on shrimp trawling vessels have plagued the industry over the past several years. It is not surprising that the Nigerian Navy is aware of these attacks but has done little in response. Militancy in the Niger Delta has caused the Navy to deploy more resources there, and it is not surprising that they are unable to curb attacks on shrimpers. While Nigerian shrimp exports to the U.S. are minimal, U.S. TED compliance certification is viewed by the Federal Department of Fisheries, and increasingly the industry, as a desirable and prestigious label. End Comment.  
HUTCHINSON